

28 February 1949

Mr. John A. Mayer, Secretary  
The Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Independence Square  
Philadelphia 5, Pa.

Dear Johnny:

Your letter of 24 February was most flattering in its request that I come and make a speech at your annual banquet in May. I am sorry to fall down on you in this connection, because it is impossible to run a decent intelligence service with a lot of publicity, and further any speech about intelligence simply cannot help including classified material if it is to be of any interest whatsoever. We have consistently avoided all publicity or all speeches except before very small groups of officers attending a school or something like that who are cleared to receive classified information.

Consequently, while I am most grateful for this display of confidence and thank you for thinking of me, I shall have to decline.

When you come down to Washington, please give me a ring and come in to see me.

With very best wishes, believe me,

Sincerely,

E. H. HILLENKÖETTER  
Rear Admiral, USN  
Director of Central Intelligence

cc: Director ✓  
Central Records (w/basic ltr of 24 Feb 49)

NOTE FOR RECORD:

Ltr to DCI fr John Mayer 1 March 49, "Thank you very much for your nice note. I certainly can understand your position regarding speech-making. I know the group will be very disappointed that you cannot come, but I know equally well that they will respect and appreciate your reasons. Best regards to yourself and Mrs. Hillenkoetter. Sincerely, John." (Orig. to Central Records)

MORI/CDF